

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – February 27, 2006

Statewide Fireworks Survey Under Way

This week I am requesting assistance from the California Fire Service to gather information to help my office prepare for the upcoming fireworks season. The information they provide can greatly improve our office's capability to address a variety of fireworks, pyrotechnic, and training issues in California by responding to the CDF/Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Fireworks Survey. I am requesting that fire chiefs assign the appropriate staff person to respond to our survey.



Last year CDF/OSFM and the Arson/Bomb Investigations (ABI) Unit led a statewide task force to aggressively detect, pursue, and apprehend persons transporting illegal fireworks into California. This resulted in over 200,000 lbs. of illegal fireworks being confiscated and disposed of by CDF staff.

In addition, CDF/OSFM and ABI provided training to CDF Units and local government on "Public Display" fireworks.

The OSFM also provides specialized training to local government and to special effects licensees to safely utilize pyrotechnic special effects in films and on stage in the entertainment industry.

The OSFM also develops regulations and identifies what fireworks qualify as "safe and sane" and are legal for sale in California, where not prohibited by local government ordinances.

The survey being conducted will help us identify where our limited resources are best utilized to maximize our efforts to reduce fires and injuries due to fireworks, pyrotechnic special effects, and other associated devices.

Preview the Survey (Results not recorded):

<http://www.zoomerang.com/build/preview/preview.zgi?ID=L22K5TSYF8SX&bp=s&p=WEB2252HU4N6PY>

Take the Survey – One per jurisdiction. (Results recorded);

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB2252HU4N6PY>

Budget Deficiency

I would like to thank Management Services staff and the entire budget strategy committee working so hard to identify a process for addressing our current budget deficiency. They have worked long and tirelessly to minimize the impact by requesting additional funding and developing a rational budget reduction strategies.

However, after reviewing the committee's recommendations, I cannot support reductions in the areas of legal mandates, safety, and training relating to succession planning. I plan to reinstate the portable radios and supervisory training. Other items identified in the earlier budget deficiency memo will continue, unless additional funds are approved. A memo will follow to more clearly identify what additional reductions strategies will be employed.

Poe Fire

I would like to thank the investigators of the Poe Fire, the CDF legal staff, and the Attorney General's office for their diligence in the Poe fire investigation and civil settlement. PG&E has tentatively agreed to pay CDF \$10 million dollars for our costs in suppressing and investigating the Poe fire. An additional \$400k goes to a nonprofit training fund to improve our investigation of fire cause and origin. For more information, contact Giny Chandler, Chief Legal Counsel.

Regards,



Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Acting Director

Training

The first presentation of the six week Company Officer Academy (COA) began on Monday, Feb. 20.

Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

Staff is working with the Office of State Fire Marshal and Fire Protection field staff to develop statewide coverage of fire hazard severity zones that takes advantage of new data and new techniques. The recent legislation that increased the fire safe clearance out to 100 feet as well as new building standards to increase the fire resiliency of new construction are both tied to official fire hazard severity zone rankings on both State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Local Responsibility Area (LRA). We will be working with CDF field staff around the state as well as other stakeholders who have greater responsibilities in the LRA to ensure that they have an opportunity to improve the draft products.

Equal Employment Opportunity Program

The first week of the 2006 Dymally-Alatorre language survey begins February 27. The results of the survey will be used by the State Personnel Board to determine whether CDF has the appropriate number of bilingual certified employees to meet the needs of the limited English proficient persons that our employees provide services to. The survey forms and directions are accessible via the language survey link under Highlights. Virgie Jackson, the 2006 Language Survey Coordinator, is available to provide assistance with any questions about the survey.

Resource Management

Staff is working with Jay Chamberlin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, and Resources Agency on developing comments and priorities on the 2007 Federal Farm Bill from all Agency units. Secretary of Agriculture Kawamura is coordinating Farm Bill comments on a state-government-wide basis.

Deputy Director Bill Snyder met with concerned Butte County parties regarding the implementation of CDF's Proposition 40 Fuels Reduction Program. The largely positive discussion identified several implementation issues that need clarification. Staff will develop and issue amendments to the Prop. 40 Program Guide to address these issues.

Resource Management Managers met with Region Chief Candace Gregory on February 16 to discuss Resource Management issues and staffing in the Central Sierra Region. Deputy Director Bill Snyder plans to organize similar meetings with the other three region chiefs in coming weeks.

Management Services

Budget Office staff will be attending an advance briefing from the Legislative Analyst Office regarding their analysis of the 2005-06 Governor's Budget and its impacts on CDF. Staff continues to work with the Department of Finance with regards to CDF's deficiency request for the current fiscal year. No decision has been made yet by DOF.

The Weaverville Forest Fire Station (FFS) project went to bid in budget last week. Construction should start the end of April first of May.

The spring Lease Revenue Bond sale (approximately \$200 million dollars) is proceeding and supports four South State FFS's and five North State FFS. CDF's portion of the bond sale totals approximately \$22 million dollars.

Capital Outlay Finance letter has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Office and Agency and has been sent to Department of Finance this week. It includes cost increases to 26 projects totaling \$96 million dollars and impacts the Academy Dorm project, 28 South State Facilities and 11 North State Facilities.